

SHANEKA HENSON
Legislative District 30
Anne Arundel County

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 203
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3578
800-492-7122 Ext. 3578
Shaneka.Henson@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 722

**Department of the Environment - Ecological Restoration
(Cross filed with HB1155 - Delegate Dana Stein)**

Chairman Feldman and Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce and provide important details regarding SB 722-
Department of the Environment – Ecological Restoration

For the record, I am Senator Shaneka Helson from the 30th Legislative District of Anne Arundel County, MD. Senator Augustine and I thank you for the opportunity to introduce and present information about this legislation.

The origins of this bill evolved from legislation adopted in 2022 and a report to the Maryland General Assembly recommending the adoption of a definition for Ecological Restoration. As stated in the report, the Maryland Department of the Environment and its supporting advocates recognized the inconsistency of terminology and lack of understanding of the intent of the environmental work to be pursued through ecological restoration.

SB722 proposes to define the term “ecological restoration” as an activity undertaken with the goal of recovering, re–establishing, or enhancing a degraded, damaged, or destroyed ecosystem through specified measures. It requires the Department of the Environment to update its regulations, as appropriate, to incorporate the definition of ecological restoration or be consistent with the definition of ecological restoration.

Joining us today to elaborate further on the reasons for these changes,

- Maryland Department of the Environment
- Audubon Society-Mid-Atlantic
- Nature Conservancy
- Assateague Coastal Trust

After you hear the testimony from those here today, I urge that you give a favorable report to SB 722.